

India slides in world university rankings

Poor performance in internationalisation of their campuses and a low research score reasons for dismal score: Times Higher Education

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Poor performance in internationalisation of their campuses and a low research score have pulled down Indian higher education institutes such as the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and some of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2018.

While IISc has dropped from the 201-250 band in the previous rankings to the 251-300 band, IIT-Delhi and IIT-Kanpur have fallen

from the 401-500 band to the 501-600 band. IIT-Madras fell from the 401-500 band to the 601-800 cohort. The drop comes at a time when the IITs have sought more funds under the human resources development ministry's Vishwajeet project aimed at helping them climb in global academic rankings.

Times Higher Education on Tuesday published the 14th annual edition of its World University Rankings, a list of the top 1,000 universities from 77 countries. According to THE, India's performance has deteriorated, with its number of



DEGREES OF EXCELLENCE

India in Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018

Institution	Rank 2018	Previous year
Indian Institute of Science	251-300	201-250
IIT-Bombay	351-400	351-400
IIT-Delhi	501-600	401-500
IIT-Kanpur	501-600	401-500
IIT-Kharagpur	501-600	501-600
IIT-Roorkee	501-600	501-600
IIT-Guwahati	601-800	601-800
IIT-Madras	601-800	401-500

Source: Times Higher Education website

universities in the top 1,000 declining from 31 to 30. The University of Oxford

retains first place in the World University Rankings. The University of Cambridge climbs

two places to second, overtaking the California Institute of Technology and Stanford University, both joint third. While the US continues to dominate the rankings, Chinese universities are climbing rapidly.

Terming the decline in India's score as "disappointing", Phil Baty, editorial director, global rankings, THE, pointed out that other Asian countries such as China and Singapore had been consistently improving their performance.

"As leading universities in other Asian territories such as China, Hong Kong and Singapore

are consistently rising up the rankings, in part thanks to high and sustained levels of funding, India's flagship Indian Institute of Science moves further away from the elite top 200," Baty said.

Indian universities performed poorly on internationalisation, with all except one dropping places, mainly due to other universities rising at a faster rate. Government policy limits the number of foreign students who can study in India and prevents international scholars from being hired in long-term faculty positions. THE is of the view that India may recover on this metric

on the back of its world-class university plan, which aims to provide additional funding to select public and private universities for infrastructure and academics.

A director of one of the seven older IITs said efforts to improve research through additional funding had been "slower than desired" from the government as well as the institutes.

Apart from the Vishwajeet project, which will initially fund the seven older IITs, the ministry is identifying 10 public and 10 private institutions as 'Institutes of Eminence'. Turn to Page 16

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The government is also setting up an empowered committee to select 20 institutes with the aim of having them ranked in the top 500 and eventually top 100 global universities.

The government announced in August it would put on hold its plan to allow foreign universities to establish campuses and award degrees in the country

but said the 20 universities chosen for the excellence initiative would be free to recruit foreign faculty, admit more foreign students and collaborate with foreign institutions.

"There is some really positive news in that India's overall research income and research quality has risen this year, and the country's world-class university plan

shows that it recognises the importance of investing in higher education, which may reverse India's decline in the rankings in future years," Baty added. "There is a need for Indian institutes to market themselves globally," said Shobha Ghosh, assistant secretary-general at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry.